Approved For Release 2008/01/17 : CIA-RDP85M00363R000400670003-6

25X1

Situation Update on Lebanon
(14 October 1983)

The precarious cease-fire continues to hold. Shia gunmen probably are responsible for recent Marine casualties. The security committee charged with supervising the cease-fire suffered a serious setback yesterday when Druze and Shia representatives stated they would no longer participate.

-- Although there is general agreement on using Greek and Italian observers for the cease-fire, there is no firm date yet for their arrival.

25X1

President Gemayel has set 20 October as the opening date for the national reconciliation conference, but there is still no agreement on a meeting place. Gemayel's decision to set a date even without agreement on a venue is in part an attempt to put the onus on Druze leader Walid Junblatt if the conference does not begin as scheduled.

-- Junblatt continues to refuse to meet at the Presidential Palace at Babda.

-- Even though the Saudis appear willing to host the conference, Syria has apparently vetoed Saudi Arabia as a meeting site.

25X1

The preparatory committee met yesterday and agreed upon five general points for discussion at the reconciliation conference.

-- Equal treatment for all areas of Lebanon.

-- Lebanon's status in the Arab world and international community.

-- The withdrawal of Israeli forces.

-- The withdrawal of all other forces whose presence is not requested by the Lebanese Government.

-- Organization of the Army.

25X1

Except for the first point, the preliminary agenda does not appear to address internal political reforms. The fact that Syrian troop withdrawal is not mentioned specifically reflects Damascus' influence in the negotiating process. Although the Lebanese/Israeli agreement of 17 May is not cited, we expect it to be a principal sticking point at the conference.

-- If the conferees concentrate on foreign policy issues, the conference could bog down before coming to grips with internal issues.

25X1

Approved For Release 2008/01/17 : CIA-RDP85M00363R000400670003-6

Approved For Release 2008/01/17 : CIA-RDP85M00363R000400670003-6

25X1

-- This apparent decision to focus on the troop withdrawal question reflects the Lebanese penchant for blaming others for their internal political problems.

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2008/01/17 : CIA-RDP85M00363R000400670003-6